

Message Text

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UNCLAS ROME 20036

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IT

SUBJECT: SENATOR JAVITS PRESS CONFERENCE

1. ON DECEMBER 7TH, SENATOR JAVITS MET WITH AMERICAN PRESS IN ROME. HIS COMMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN REPORTED IN THE ITALIAN PRESS EXCEPT FOR AN ARTICLE BY LEO WOLLEMBERG IN /IL TEMPO/ OF DECEMBER 9 WHO INTERVIEWED SENATOR JAVITS JUST PRIOR TO THE PRESS CONFERENCE. IN WOLLEMBERG'S ARTICLE, SENATOR JAVITS IS REPORTED AS HAVING MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON ITALIAN COMMUNISM AND ON AMERICAN AND OTHER AID TO ITALY. (QUOTES ARE TRANSLATED FROM ITALIAN.)

2. /COMMUNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT/: SENATOR JAVITS PREFACED HIS COMMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT BY STATING THAT THE CHOICE OF WHETHER OR NOT TO HAVE COMMUNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT IS UP TO ITALIANS AND THAT THE US, BEING A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY, WILL RESPECT THAT CHOICE. THE SENATOR WENT ON TO SAY THAT, IF THE PCI DOES ENTER THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, THE USG WOULD "CAREFULLY EXAMINE THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND, IF NECESSARY, REVIEW THE SITUATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE CONSEQUENCES THAT COULD DERIVE FROM IT FOR RELATIONS BETWEEN ITALY AND ITS ALLIES."

THE SENATOR ADDED: "THE PRESENCE OF COMMUNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT OF A MEMBER OF NATO WOULD POSE A PROBLEM OF THEIR ACCESS

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TO MILITARY SECRETS OF THE ALLIANCE. IF SUCH A PRESENCE SHOULD

BE SIGNIFICANT, WE WOULD NOT BE OBLIGED TO SHARE MILITARY SECRETS WITH A COUNTRY IN WHICH THAT HAPPENED SINCE IT COULD ENDANGER OUR OWN SECURITY."

3. /ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE/: SENATOR JAVITS SPOKE POSITIVELY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S "AUSTERITY PROGRAM" BUT SUGGESTED THAT ADDITIONAL MEASURES, SUCH AS BETTER TAX COLLECTION, WOULD PROVIDE A BASIS FOR THE IMF AND FRIENDS AND ALLIES OF ITALY TO HAVE FAITH THAT ITALY WILL MAKE THE NECESSARY SACRIFICES TO OVERCOME ITS PRESENT PROBLEMS AND PROVIDE A SOLID BASIS FOR THE FUTURE. THE ESSENTIAL POINT, SAID SENATOR JAVITS, "IS THE EXISTENCE OF REASONABLE GUARANTEES THAT INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE, EITHER MULTILATERAL OR BILATERAL, WILL CONTRIBUTE TO A LASTING RECOVERY RATHER THAN COVERING, YEAR AFTER YEAR, THE DEBTS IN ITALIAN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ACCOUNTS WHICH WOULD BE, FRANKLY, UNACCEPTABLE." SENATOR JAVITS CLEARLY EXPRESSED HIS PREFERENCE THAT ASSISTANCE BE PROVIDED TO ITALY THROUGH THE IMF OR OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. IN HIS RESPONSE TO A QUESTION AS TO AMERICAN CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARD ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE SHOULD COMMUNISTS ENTER THE GOVERNMENT SENATOR JAVITS SAID, "SHOULD SUCH A SITUATION OCCUR, OUR CONGRESS WOULD EVALUATE THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND WOULD ARRIVE AT A DECISION ON THE BASIS OF SEVERAL CONSIDERATIONS: CONSIDERATIONS OF A HUMANITARIAN CHARACTER; CONSIDERATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP FOR THE ITALIAN PEOPLE; CONSIDERATIONS OF CURRENT POLITICS (HOW ITALIAN COMMUNISTS CONDUCT THEMSELVES); AND CONSIDERATIONS OF A HISTORIC CHARACTER, I.E., RELATION TO WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE COMMUNIST PARTIES HAVE COME TO POWER."

4. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, SENATOR JAVITS ALSO EXPRESSED HIS FAITH IN THE MILITARY CAPACITY OF NATO DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT CURRENTLY NEEDS MODERNIZATION AND UPDATING IN CERTAIN AREAS. HE ALSO EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THERE WILL BE CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE, BUT MADE THE POINT THAT THIS IS A TWO-WAY STREET AND THAT OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES MUST ALSO GIVE GREATER IMPORTANCE TO AND SEEK BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. BEAUDRY

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